

Houston-Galveston Regional Recycling and Conservation Guide

Austin County

Brazoria County

Chambers County

Colorado County

Fort Bend County

Galveston County

Harris County

Liberty County

Matagorda County

Montgomery County

Walker County

Waller County

Wharton County

Where Does the Trash Go?

**Where does your trash go after you throw it in the can?
Does it magically disappear? No!**

The Landfill

After garbage leaves your home, it goes to a landfill. A landfill is a large space where trash is buried in the ground. Landfills must receive a permit from the State and are safe when they are operated correctly. However, it is very expensive to operate a good landfill because of the rules and regulations needed to make them safe. We need to reduce what we toss out so landfills don't fill up fast.

Dumps

Dumps are illegal places to dispose of garbage and are harmful to the environment. They pollute water, attract rodents carrying diseases, breed germs: *all of which can make humans and animals sick.*

Waste Hits Your Wallet

- Americans throw away 2.5 million plastic bottles every hour.
- The United States produces enough plastic film each year to shrink-wrap the state of Texas.
- Every day, U.S. businesses generate enough paper to circle the Earth 20 times.
- Every ton of paper recycled saves approximately 17 trees.
- Recycling one aluminum can saves the equivalent of enough energy to run a TV set for three hours.
- Every glass bottle that is recycled can save enough energy to light a 100-watt light bulb for four hours.
- By recycling one ton of glass, we save the energy equivalent of nine gallons of fuel oil.
- At least 20% of Texas' solid waste is from grass clippings, leaves and other landscape wastes.
- Texans spend over \$1 billion annually on solid waste disposal services for over 22 million tons of garbage.
- The recycling industry in Texas employs 20,000 workers and adds \$2.9 billion in value to the Texas economy.

*We must reduce waste in
landfills to save space
and natural resources.*

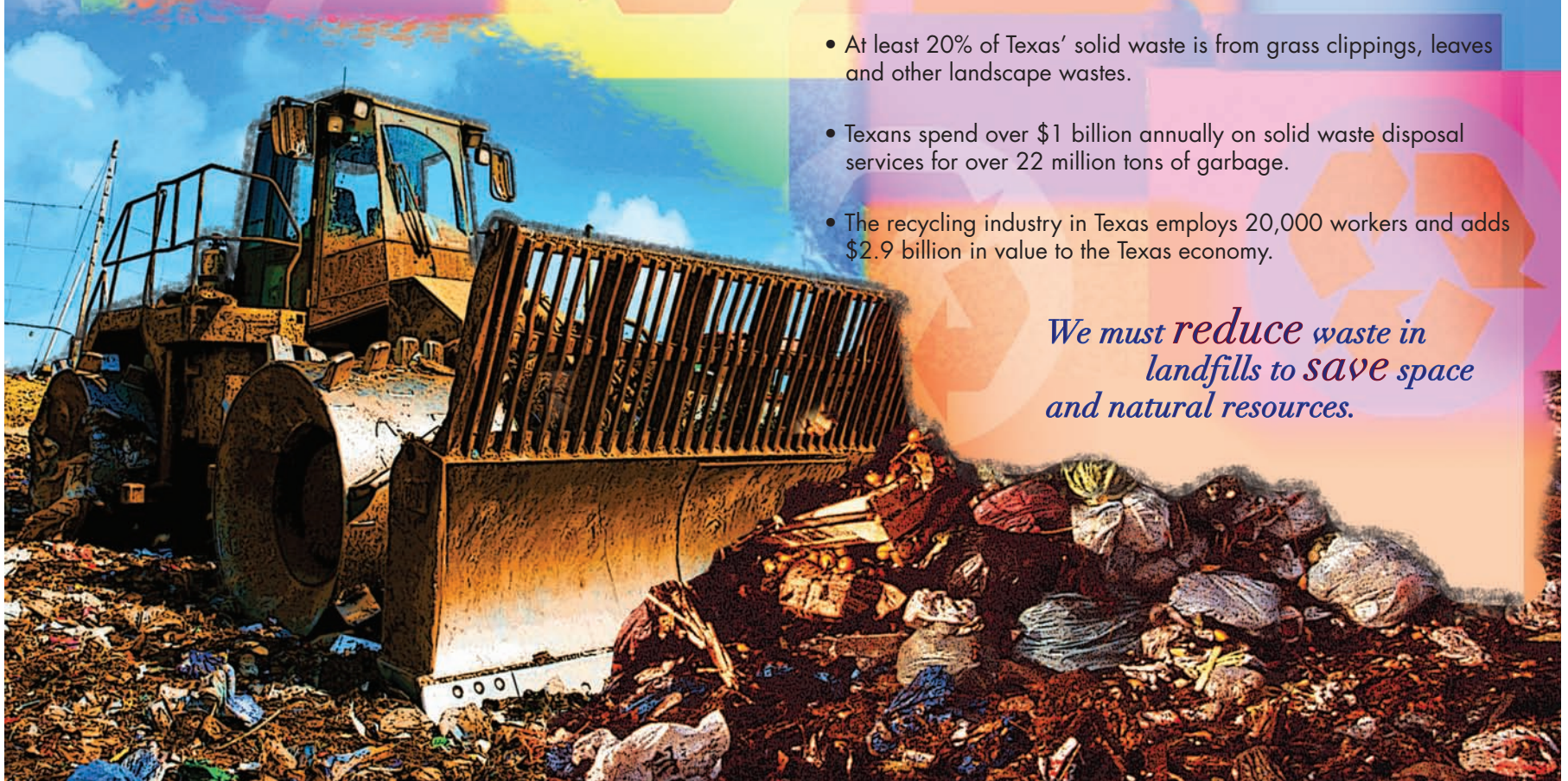


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SPANISH: Reversed Side

*Making
a difference
starts with
you.*



Q: Why is it Important to Recycle?

- Recycling is a way to keep waste out of landfills.
- Recycling recovers valuable raw materials. If we make aluminum cans from recycled cans, then we don't have to disturb the environment by mining new materials.
- Recycling reduces pollution and saves energy that would have been used for making products from raw materials.

Q: How Can One Person Make a Difference?

If not you, who? If we combine our efforts together, we can make a difference. *Look at it this way:* All the millions of tons of waste that goes into landfills started as an old computer, yard trimmings or a used detergent bottle at somebody's house - maybe even your house!

Q: What Would Happen if Everyone Stopped Recycling?

- Disposing of garbage would become much more expensive. Since everything would be thrown away, landfills would fill up fast. We would have to build more landfills to accept the new garbage.
- The supply of any material is limited. Many natural resources would quickly disappear. If we keep filling our landfills with aluminum, plastic and steel, there will eventually be no more of those materials left.

Household Hazardous Waste - HHW

How Big is Your Collection?

Most of the chemicals we use in our home are considered "hazardous" and become "waste" when we want to throw them away. If your home is like most in America, you've probably got quite a collection. Americans generate 1.6 million tons of HHW per year. The average home can collect as much as 100 pounds!

Why not just throw it in the trash? Many landfills in Texas won't accept HHW because of the dangers associated with it and the fact that it is often in liquid form. When people place HHW in their household trash, it is a risk to sanitation workers who handle it. It is important to properly manage your HHW to avoid harm to yourself, other people and the environment.

Tips for Reducing HHW

- Use a microfiber cloth for cleaning. It is made of specially engineered fibers that may be used wet or dry without chemicals and can be re-used over and over again.
- Buy the least hazardous product by reading product labels to determine safety.
- Do not "over-buy". Buy only what you need and avoid creating leftover product.
- Excess paint is the most common HHW. Figure out how much paint you will need before starting a job. It will save you time, money and prevent unnecessary waste.

Electronic Waste (e-waste)

High-Tech Trash

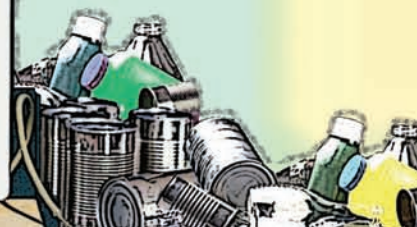
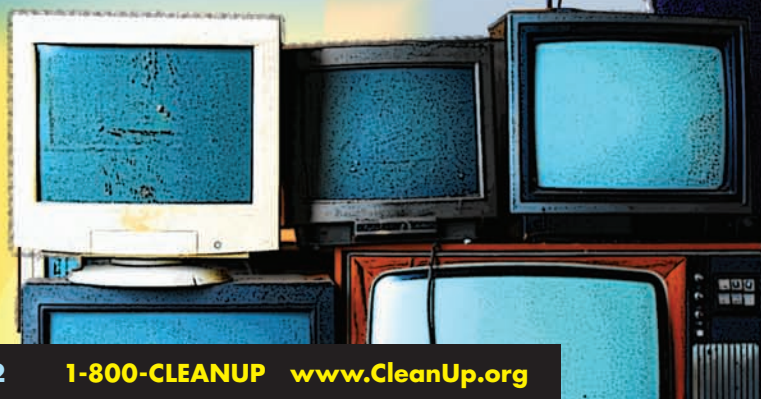
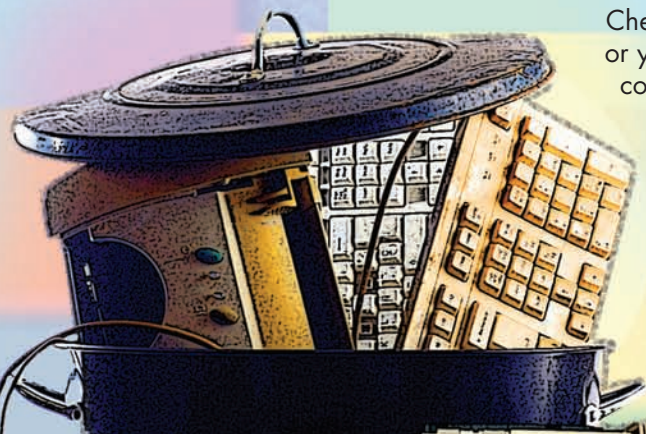
With newer and more high-tech electronic products available, we are replacing older models at rapid rates. As a result, electronics are becoming one the fastest growing parts of America's waste.

Electronic equipment contains poisons that can be hazardous to human health and the environment if their disposal is not properly managed. Cadmium, lead and mercury are common toxins found in electronic equipment.

Electronics are also made with valuable resources such as precious metals, engineered plastics, glass and other materials. We can recover these resources by recycling electronics. It also causes pollution to manufacture new electronics from raw materials. The key to reducing e-waste in our landfills is to **Reduce, Reuse and Recycle**. Many companies now accept old computers and cell phones when you purchase a new one. There are also several drop-off centers in the Houston-Galveston region that offer e-waste recycling. Visit www.CleanUp.org for more information about e-waste and the recycling center nearest you.

Check **1-800-CleanUp**, www.CleanUp.org or your local Solid Waste Department to find a collection facility or collection event near you.

*Do not "over-buy"
HHW. Buy only
what you need.*



Plastics

The Most Used Material in the World Since 1976

Have you ever noticed the numbers on the bottom of a plastic bottle? Do you know what they mean?

The numbers signify the type of plastic that the product is made from and it can also help you to know if it is recyclable.

Plastics can be numbered from 1 through 7, but the most common types of recyclable plastics are #1 plastic (PET plastic), #2 plastic (HDPE plastic) and film plastic (LDPE plastic), which is commonly used in grocery bags or shrink wrap.

Number 1 (PET) is often used in milk jugs or detergent bottles. It is easily recycled by breaking it apart into small chips which are washed, dried and reused. Some common end uses for recycled #1 plastic are plastic pipes, lumber, flower pots, trash cans, or containers for motor oil or cleaning supplies.

Number 2 (HDPE) plastics are commonly used in food packaging, as well as water and soda bottles. Number 2 plastic is one of the most used

recycled plastics and is commonly used in textiles. Some companies make their carpet using 100% recycled #2 plastic. Number 2 plastic is also spun like cotton candy to make fiber filling or fabric for things like pillows, quilts, or jackets and a large quantity goes back into the bottle market.

Plastic films (LDPE) are often used for plastic bags, shrink wrap and grocery bags. Film plastics are washed and reformed or used to make new products. Some end uses for recycled LDPE plastic films are plastic trash bags and grocery sacks, plastic tubing, agricultural film and plastic lumber.

The type of plastic that can be recycled depends on where you live.

Most recycling centers will accept #1 and #2 plastic.

Check with your local recycle center to find out what plastics they accept or visit www.CleanUp.org to find a plastic recycler near you.

*You can
recycle
plastics #1
and #2.*



GrassCycling

Reuse Grass?

GrassCycling is the natural recycling of grass by leaving clippings on the lawn when mowing. Grass clippings quickly decompose, returning valuable nutrients to the soil. Composting is another great way to recycle yard waste. Find out more about composting by visiting www.cleanup.org.

- GrassCycling saves time, money and protects the environment.
- Labor time is reduced since there is no bagging or the need to dispose of clippings.
- Grass clippings add beneficial organic matter (free fertilizer) to soil and produce healthy, green lawns.
- GrassCycling also reduces the amount of yard waste disposed in landfills.

GrassCycling FAQs

Does GrassCycling cause thatch?

No! Grass roots are the primary cause of thatch, not grass clippings. A small amount of thatch (approximately 1/2 inch) is actually beneficial to a lawn, providing insulation to roots and serving as a mulch to prevent excessive water evaporation and soil compaction.

Does GrassCycling spread lawn disease?

No! Improper watering and fertilizing are the primary cause of disease spread. If an accommodating environment for grass disease is present, infestation will occur whether clippings are collected or not.

Will GrassCycling make my lawn look bad?

No! If a lawn is properly mowed, watered, and fertilized, GrassCycling can produce a healthier-looking lawn. It is important to cut the lawn frequently to produce small clippings that will fall between the standing blades and decompose quickly.

Bag-It and Recycle-It

Trimmings in One Bag – Trash in Another!

Many local communities have Bag-It programs: *putting yard trimmings in a separate plastic bag from trash and garbage*. Place the bag at the curb on your regular garbage day and it will be collected and sent to a vendor to process into mulch. Call 1-800-CleanUp or visit www.CleanUp.org to find out if your community participates in a Bag-It program. Check with your local Solid Waste Department for their rules or follow these common tips below.

Bag-It Reminders

- Make sure there are no foreign items in the bag other than those produced by nature: grass, leaves, twigs.
- Bags cannot weigh more than 50 pounds and must be less than 4 ft. in length and 18 inches in diameter.
- Place materials at the curb on your garbage collection day.
- Do not place yard waste in your garbage container.

Yard trimmings are 20% of what is sitting in landfills.





Paint

Paint Smart & Paint Safe

An average of two gallons of household paint is sold per person in the United States every year. A lot of that paint gets thrown away and ends up in landfills.

Why is Paint Disposal a Problem?

Paint contains chemicals (solvents and metals) that can damage soil and water if disposed of improperly.

Paint should never be poured down the drain, dumped on the ground or thrown in trash.

When poured down the drain, many of the chemicals in paint will not be treated by sewage treatment. The untreated chemicals might get discharged into lakes and streams and contaminate the waters. Paint should be kept out of the trash as well, because most household trash is compacted, releasing paint from the can. In a landfill, the paint can seep out and contaminate the soil and ground water.

Paint Smart Tips

- **Buy Water-Based Latex**

It's easier to clean up latex and you can discard it at home once it is dried out.

- **Buy Only What You Need**

One gallon of paint will cover 300 to 400 sq. feet. Don't buy a gallon when a quart will do.

*Buy only **water-based** Latex Paint.*

- **Use Up All Paint**

Use any extra paint for touch-up jobs and small projects.

- **Give Away or Donate Extra Paint**

If you can't use your leftover paint, donate it to community groups or take it to your community recycling facility.

- **Store Paint Correctly and it will Last for Years**

Store your paint can upside down! Yes – that's right. The paint will create a tight seal around the lid, keeping the paint fresh until you need it again.

- **Dry Out Leftover Latex Paint and Discard the Can**

Dry out latex paint (one inch or less) by opening the can and letting the liquid evaporate.



Construction & Demolition Waste (C&D)

Building & Remodeling Creates Debris – Plan For It

While Texas is a big state, our resources are not infinite, including landfill capacity. In fact, the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ), in a 2002 study, estimated that the 13 counties of the Houston-Galveston area would run out of landfill space by 2016 if no new landfills are built. That means ten short years.

The Houston-Galveston region is growing rapidly. We are constructing more than 36,000 new single family homes each year, remodeling older homes at an even faster rate and businesses continue to grow at higher than national levels. All of this represents an enormous amount of C & D waste. Residential and commercial construction industries must step up and help extend the life of our current landfills and avoid the challenges of building new ones through better C & D waste reduction practices.

Planning, with waste reduction in mind, is the key to a successful waste reduction effort. Reducing waste is the simplest and the most beneficial of the 3R's: **Reduce, Reuse, Recycle**. Not only can reducing waste save money by saving disposal fees, but also by reducing the need to purchase materials. For more information, visit www.RecycleCDdebris.com.

Habitat for Humanity

A Kinder, Gentler Building Material

A good resource for new, gently used or blemished building materials at low cost is your local Habitat for Humanity. Proceeds generated from the sale of building materials go towards construction of new housing. Check out "For More Information" on page 11, or visit www.HoustonHabitat.org and www.habitat.org/local.

Illegal Dumping

Ugly Term for an Ugly Sight

Illegal dumping is exactly what the name implies: *the disposal of waste on a property without a permit*. It is estimated that there are hundreds of illegal dumping sites across the state and it has become a serious issue in the Houston-Galveston area. Illegal dumping is against the law and contributes to several problems including health risks and lowering property values. Illegal dumping often happens in secluded areas, dead end roads, along roadsides and frequently but not always, late at night. The waste primarily is non-hazardous material that is dumped to avoid disposal fees, or the time and effort required for proper disposal. If you see someone illegally dumping, call 1-888-777-3186 (Texas residents only) to report the incident. If caught, the dumper can be fined and/or receive jail time.

Materials typically dumped include:

- Construction and demolition debris (C & D), such as drywall, shingles, lumber, bricks, concrete, siding
- Abandoned vehicles, parts, tires
- Furniture and household appliances
- Yard waste and wood debris
- Household garbage

REDUCING
waste is the simplest of the 3R's:
Reduce, Reuse, Recycle.



Keep It Out Of The Street

Help Keep Storm Water Clean

Ever see someone pour oil into the storm drain? Guess where it goes: Galveston Bay. Did you know it is illegal to dump waste and pollution into storm drains? Substances that make their way into the storm drain system flow directly into our bayous and ultimately into Galveston Bay. Storm water receives no treatment, so if storm water is contaminated by pollutants, then it stays polluted. So, do not put anything into the storm drains. They are used to prevent flooding from excess rain water, and can be clogged by waste or debris that is dumped into them, making flooding problems worse. If you need information on how to dispose of household hazardous waste, using less toxic alternatives or the proper use of pesticides, herbicides and fertilizers, visit www.CleanWaterClearChoice.org or call 713-290-3000.

Heavy Trash

The Big Stuff

Heavy trash is an item that cannot be put into your garbage can or easily lifted onto a pick-up truck. Many communities offer "Heavy Trash Day" collection once a month. Check with your community to find out the rules for your area, or follow these common tips for heavy trash pick-up.

- Coordinate the placement of heavy trash with your proper collection day.
- The earliest you can place heavy items at the curb for collection is usually the Friday before your collection day.

Do not put anything into storm drains.

- Make sure your heavy trash is at the curb early in the morning on your scheduled heavy trash collection day.
- Please do not leave heavy trash at the curb for weeks. It is dangerous, as well as unsightly, and you can be fined.



Curbside Recycling

At Your Service

Curbside Recycling Collection is one of the most convenient forms of recycling provided to single-family residences in the City of Houston.

Why don't we have curbside recycling in our neighborhood?

Having a citywide curbside recycling program will be great, but due to the costs of the program, it is not yet possible. If your neighborhood would like to get on the curbside waiting list, please contact 3-1-1 for the neighborhood requirement criteria.

Why aren't all materials accepted in the program, especially when the item is recyclable?

Recycling is market driven. If there is no local market or vendor for a particular item, the costs for collecting and shipping materials is usually too expensive.

I don't have curbside in my neighborhood, so isn't it easier to throw it into the trash?

Just because something is easy, does not make it right. Recycling is voluntary in the Houston-Galveston region and unlike many other areas, there is currently no legislation or ordinance that dictates recycling. We encourage you to **Reduce, Reuse and Recycle** because it's the right thing to do.

Important Curbside Guidelines

1. Rinse and drain containers.
2. Remove lids, caps, plastic bags and packaging material.
3. Place recyclable materials at the curb by 7 a.m. on your recycling day.
4. Paper should be placed in a paper grocery bag and placed next to the bin.
5. Used oil should be in the original container or a screw top non-detergent container.
6. **When In Doubt, Leave It Out.** A small amount of contamination can ruin an entire load and add fees to dispose of the materials.

City of Houston Curbside Recycling Collects:

- Paper
- Telephone Books
- Cans
- Plastics #1 and #2
- Used Motor Oil



CITY OF HOUSTON PROGRAMS & FACILITIES

Drop-Off Sites

Drop-Off Sites are for neighborhoods without curbside recycling. The City of Houston has five permanent sites where all residents (non-commercial) can bring household recyclables. Drop-off locations are the only locations where glass bottles and jars are accepted.

Drop-Off Site Locations

- 3602 Center: *open daily*
- 1200 Brittmoore: *open daily*
- 1245 Judiway (glass only): *open daily*
- 3210 W. Lake Houston Parkway (Kingwood Park and Ride): *2nd and 4th weekends each month*
- Highway 3 @ Dixie Farm Road (Ellington Field): *open daily*
- Westpark Recycling Center 5900 Westpark: *open Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. - 5 p.m.*

Household Recyclables Accepted at Drop-off Sites

- Newspaper, magazines, office paper
- Glass food and beverage bottles and jars (no ceramics or plate glass)
- Plastic bottles and jugs (#1 and #2 only - marked on the bottom)
- Aluminum and tin cans
- Cardboard boxes (must be flattened with packing materials removed)

Neighborhood Depositories

Use the three Neighborhood Depositories to dispose of big, heavy and bulky items, household recyclables as described to the left, tires, scrap metal and to recycle wood waste. Neighborhood Depositories are also open on weekends. Call 3-1-1 for hours of operation.

- Sunbeam Neighborhood Depository at 5100 Sunbeam
- Lawndale Neighborhood Depository at 9200 Lawndale
- Kirkpatrick Neighborhood Depository at 5565 Kirkpatrick



The Westpark Recycling Center

The One-Stop-Drop Place

The Westpark Recycling Center, at 5900 Westpark, is a drive-through facility where Houston residents (non-commercial) can drop off their recyclables. Currently, more than 6,000 citizens bring their recyclables to the center each month. Westpark accepts #1 and #2 plastic containers, aluminum and tin cans, BOPA materials (Batteries, Oil and oil filters, latex Paint, Antifreeze), paper, newspapers, telephone books, magazines, cardboard, computers and other residential electronic scraps (5 per customer per month), glass bottles and jars, and used tires (10 per customer per month).

You can also recycle craft items and books. These items end up in the ReStore, a thrift shop located inside the Westpark Recycling Center building. It's fast and easy and all services are offered free-of charge to City of Houston residents.

*Drop-Off Sites
are convenient
for neighborhoods
without curbside
recycling.*



Houston-Galveston Regional Recycling Centers

Austin County

- 600 W. Nichols Street, Bellville 77418
- 1097 Downey Road, Sealy 77474
- 6607 Commerce, Wallis 77485

Brazoria County

- 3423 Harkey Road, Pearland 77584
- 550 West Highway 6, Alvin 77511
- 10310 FM 523, Angleton 77515
- 103 Canna Lane, Lake Jackson 77566
- 3210 FM 523, Oyster Creek 77541
- 2012 Old Alvin Road, Pearland 77581
- 211 W. Second Street, Sweeny 77480

Chambers County

- 1811 Belton Lane, Anahuac 77514
- 2817 Eagle Ferry Road, Anahuac 77514
- 308 Eagle Drive, Anahuac 77514
- 7501 Highway 65, Anahuac 77514
- 806 Plummer Camp Road, Anahuac 77514
- 5121 Lawrence Road, Beach City 77520
- 10610 Eagle Drive, Mont Belvieu 77580

- 24318 I-10 East, Wallisville 77597
- 47414b I-10 East, Winnie 77665

Colorado County

- 1427b Montezuma St., Columbus 78934
- 801 St. Charles Street, Weimar 78962

Fort Bend County

- 1003 FM 361, Needville 77461
- FM 2234, Missouri City 77459
- Needville City Barn, Needville 77461
- Pleak City Hall, Richmond 77469
- 1200 Blume Road, Rosenberg 77471
- 111 Gillingham, Sugar Land 77478

Galveston County

- 702 61st Street, Galveston 77550
- 1500 Municipal, La Marque 77568
- 3301 Loop 197 N, Texas City 77590

Liberty County

- 209 Peach, Cleveland 77327
- 27869 Highway 146 North, Cleveland 77327
- Highway 834, Hull 77564
- FM 770 S, Raywood 77582

Matagorda County

- FM 459 El Maton, Bay City 77414
- 1812 Avenue H, Bay City 77414
- 700 Avenue F, Bay City 77414
- FM 2540, Bay City 77414
- 1305 Johnson Road, Palacios 77465

Montgomery County

- 31354 Industrial Drive, Magnolia 77335
- 2501 N. Frazier St., Conroe 77303
- 3 Robert Road, New Caney 77357
- 1122 Pruitt Road, Spring 77380
- 5310 Research Forest Dr., The Woodlands 77387
- 200 Bell Street, Willis 77378

Walker County

- 590 IH-45 N, Huntsville 77320

Waller County

- 1125 Austin Street, Hempstead 77445

Wharton County

- 606 S. Dill Street, East Bernard 77435
- 635 Main Street, East Bernard 77435
- 17423 N. Foundation Loop, East Bernard 77435
- 1270 N. Mechanic Street, El Campo 77437
- 1001 W. Milam Street, Wharton 77488
- 221 S. Fulton Street, Wharton 77488
- 911 E. Boling Highway, Wharton 77488
- 208 S. Sheppard Street, Wharton 77488

Harris County

- 701 E. San Augustine, Deer Park 77536
- 1693 N. 23rd, La Porte 77571
- 2801 Pasadena Blvd., Pasadena 77503
- 1425 Harkey, Pearland 77584

- 5001 NASA Road. 1, Clear Lake Park, Harris Co. PCT 2 77002
- 4400 Edith, Bellaire 77401
- 5004 Dincans, West University 77005
- 1601 W. Main, Baytown 77520
- 20634 Kenswick Dr. Jesse Jones Park, Harris Co. PCT 4 77338

City of Houston

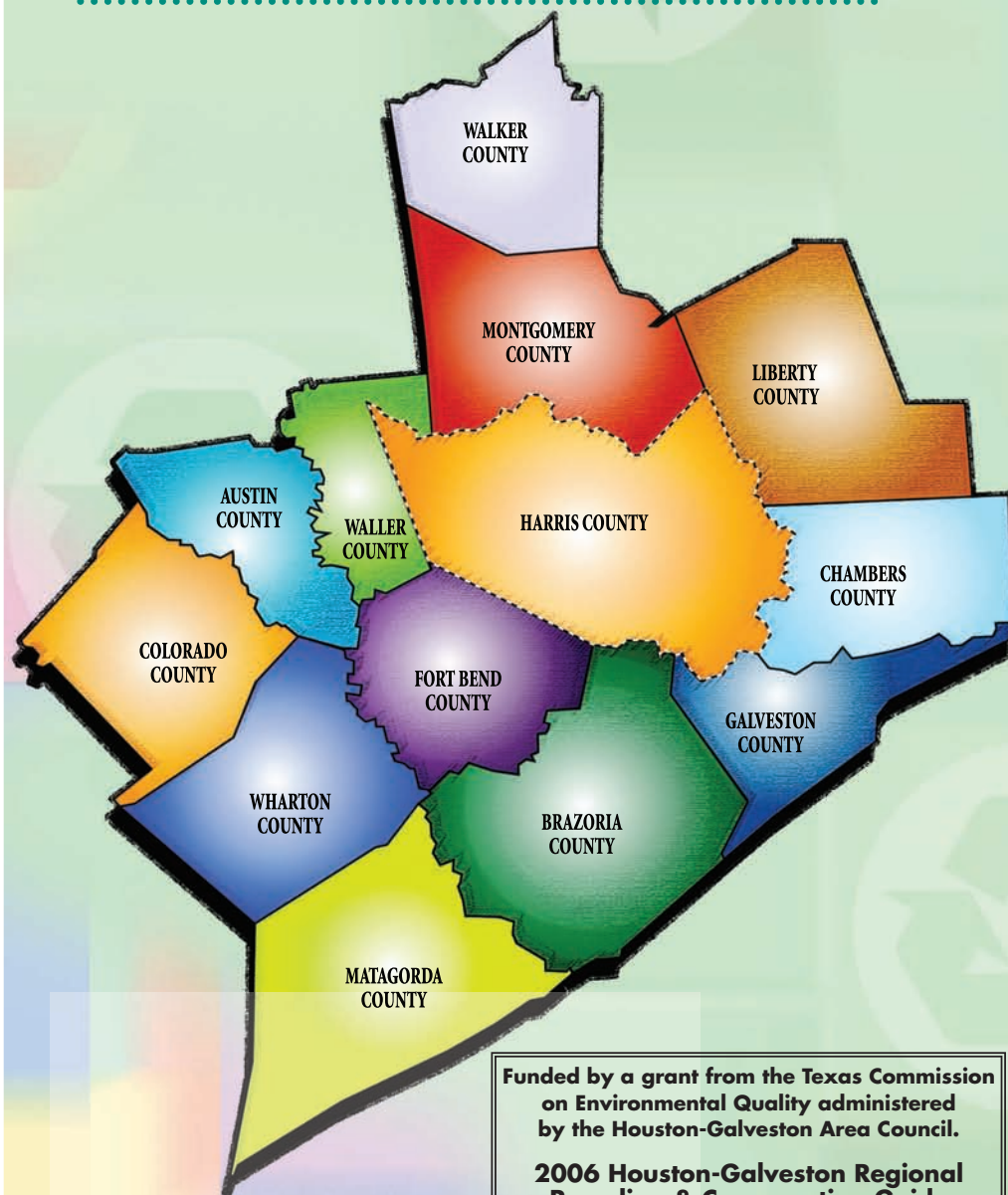
- Lawndale Depository, 9200 Lawndale 77012
- Ellington Field, Highway 3 at Brantley Road
- 3602 Center St. at Harvard 77007
- Environmental Service Center South, 11500 S. Post Oak 77035
- Sunbeam Depository, 5100 Sunbeam 77033
- Westpark Consumer Recycle Center, 5900 Westpark 77057
- 1245 Judiway 77018
- Kingwood Park and Ride, 3210 W. Lake Houston Parkway 77044
- Kirkpatrick Depository, 5565 Kirkpatrick 77029
- Environmental Service Center North, 5614 Neches St. 77026

The most common items accepted at recycling centers are: aluminum, paper and plastics 1 & 2.

Check with your community recycling center to find out what items are accepted or visit www.cleanup.org.



Houston-Galveston Region



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For More Information

1-800-CleanUp (253-2687)

www.CleanUp.org

Citizen's Environmental Coalition

www.CEChouston.org

Construction and Demolition Waste

www.RecycleCDdebris.com

Galveston Bay and Estuary Program

www.gbep.state.tx.us

Galveston Bay Foundation

www.galvbay.org

Habitat for Humanity

www.HoustonHabitat.org

(Local info)

www.habitat.org/local

Harris County SWIM Program

713-290-3000

www.CleanWaterClearChoice.org

Houston-Galveston Area Council

713-627-3200

www.h-gac.com

Houston Service Helpline

3-1-1

www.HoustonSolidWaste.org

Illegal Dumping

1-888-777-3186 or

713 525-A-RAT

(Inside the City of Houston)

Keep Texas Beautiful

1-800-CLEAN-TX

www.ktb.org

North American Hazardous Materials Management Association (NAHMA)

877-292-1403

www.nahmma.org

Recycling Alliance of Texas

www.RecycleTX.com

Stop Trashing Houston

www.StopTrashingHouston.org

Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ)

www.tceq.state.tx.us

Texas Recycles Day

www.TexasRecyclesDay.org

532-239-3150

